SECTION 5.

City of Lafayette Memorandum

To: City Council

From: Design Review Commission

Date: April 2, 2009

Subject: Comments on the Draft Downtown Strategy & Specific Plan

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1. The Plan does not appear to clearly identify the challenges and issues that face Lafayette. The Plan should articulate the challenges and issues, provide a list of tools and *prioritize them.* (The overall prioritization of the recommendations in the Plan is not clear.)
2. The Plan should articulate the various elements that make Lafayette unique as a community, specifically the downtown. What are the 'good spots' in Lafayette, what makes them so good, and how do we build on them? (e.g. where are the best views of Mt. Diablo, where is the best sun exposure, areas for pedestrian activity, etc.)
3. The Plan should provide a comprehensive list of issues, goals, priorities, and timelines. (e.g. who and when will downtown design guidelines be developed.)
4. Making the town more pedestrian friendly should be one of the highest priorities in the Plan.
5. The creek greenways should be a low(er) priority, considering the cost to daylight / improve them, and the private property interests involved in doing so. Require future development to implement creek plan as redevelopment occurs.
6. Making Mt. Diablo Boulevard in the core area one lane in each direction, with no median and angled parking, would be the best way to make the downtown more pedestrian friendly and promote commerce. Otherwise, the pedestrian areas and shops are separated by a perceptibly impenetrable river of traffic. ("you need to be able to jaywalk")
7. Adequate, easy parking feed directly into people getting out of their cars and onto the sidewalks as pedestrians, shoppers & diners.
8. Support for the proposed height increase with appropriate setback.
9. Support for increase in permitted density.
10. Support for the sharing / linking of off-street parking for businesses in the downtown.
11. Minutes from the February 10, 2009 and March 10, 2009 DRC meetings are attached.

C:\Users\gwolff\Desktop\DRC Comments on Downtown Strategy.doc

EXCERPT

CITY OF LAFAYETTE
DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION
Minutes

LAFAYETTE COMMUNITY CENTER
500 St. Mary's Road
Lafayette, CA

February 10, 2009
7:00 p.m.

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by Commission Chair Tom Lee.

2. Commissioners present: Commission Chair Lee, Commissioners Bob Cleaver and Andre Ptaszynski. Commissioners Bill Marquand and Ken Hertel joined the meeting at 7:10 p.m. and 7:15 p.m., respectively.

Staff: Glenda Warmoth, Assistant Planner; Greg Wolff, Senior Planner

3. **ADOPTION OF AGENDA:** Commissioner Cleaver advised that he would be recusing himself from Item 9A because he was working currently on a neighboring property. Commissioner Cleaver moved to approve the agenda as published. Commissioner Ptaszynski seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous consent. (3-0-0)

4. **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Mike Wilson, a Moraga resident whose business address was 3687 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette, commented that he has been looking at purchasing a commercial building in Lafayette in which to conduct his insurance business. However, he has learned that the current zoning regulations restrict insurance businesses from first floor areas of commercial buildings in the downtown area. Mr. Wilson noted that architects and real estate agents are not prohibited in this manner, and questioned the difference that created this zoning inequity. Commission Chair Lee noted that Mr. Wilson's circumstances related to land use rather than design review and, as a result, was an issue the Design Review Commission had no jurisdiction over it. He referred Mr. Wilson to the Planning Commission and recommended raising the subject with them. Asking staff for clarification of the zoning regulations, Ms. Warmoth confirmed that the first floor restriction did not apply to all of downtown Lafayette but rather to certain sections of town where retail businesses were preferred. Commission Chair Lee mentioned that a later agenda item at this meeting was a discussion of the Downtown Plan. He stated there was a plan in the works to address strengthening the business climate and finding opportunities for the entire redevelopment area.

Commissioner Cleaver reported a telephone call he had with attorney David Bowie regarding the Van Hoften residence, a matter not on the agenda at this meeting or any future meeting. In their conversation, Mr. Bowie mentioned that he was looking forward to having the Holt residence on Sessions Road come before the Design Review Commission following consideration of the matter at the City Council level. Commissioner Cleaver stated for the public record that he wished Mr. Bowie well with that project, but did not discuss the project itself.

5. **STUDY SESSIONS:** None

6. **SIGNS:** None

7. **CONSENT CALENDAR:** Commissioner Cleaver moved to approve the Consent Calendar. Commissioner Marquand seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous consent. (5-0-0)

A. **JANUARY 13, 2009 MEETING MINUTES Recommendation**: Approve

B. **HDP41-08 MARK BECKER (APPLICANT), PETER & AMANDA DOCTER (OWNERS), LR-10 ZONING**: Request for: (1) Phase II Hillside Development Permit pursuant to Section 6-2065(a)(8)(B) of the Lafayette Municipal Code ("LMC"), (2) Design Review pursuant to Section 6-1903 LMC, (3) Grading Permit pursuant to Section 3-701 LMC, and (4) Tree Permit pursuant to Section 6-1707 LMC, to construct a new single-family residence and three accessory buildings within a man-made tree with a gross floor

the addition to the motion and added that he found the comments contained in the February 9, 2009 letter thoughtful and insightful. He encouraged the applicant to consider the issues raised in that letter.

Commissioner Marquand seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous consent. (4-0-0)

10. **OTHER BUSINESS**:

A. **DRAFT LAFAYETTE DOWNTOWN STRATEGY & SPECIFIC PLAN**

Recommendation: Provide feedback to the Downtown Strategy Advisory Committee Representative Tom Lee

Mr. Wolff reported that the draft document had been published and distributed to all City Commissions and Committees for review and feedback. It was also published on the City website and publicized in the City's Vistas newsletter. The City Council requested that each Commission and Committee consider the plan no later than March 2009. The Commission's forum for discussion was open to the Commission and the public, and Mr. Wolff advised that this meeting would not be the only opportunity for discussion of the Downtown Strategic Plan.

Commission Chair Lee, as the Design Review Commission's representative on the Downtown Strategy Advisory Committee, reported that the Committee was about half way through its review of the draft document and had already received some testimony from the public. He stated that the organization of the plan addressed issues facing the City, including traffic, parks, design and planning. The plan was comprehensive, mirroring the downtown core and coinciding, in large part, with the Redevelopment Agency area.

Commission Chair Lee stated that his participation on the Downtown Strategy Advisory Committee has been focused on issues that related to the Design Review Commission and the City's design guidelines. He was interested in the Design Review Commission's comments and input regarding proposed revision to design guidelines. He noted there were some controversial issues to be addressed in terms of increasing density to promote commerce or limiting density to preserve the small town feel and views of the hills.

Commission Chair Lee noted two issues he was particularly interested in were taking a more aggressive look at the downtown section where an extension of the sidewalks with four lanes of traffic separated by a median was proposed. Commission Chair Lee would like to see a decrease in traffic lanes to two, without a median and with diagonal parking. He felt that use of the median was not good for commerce as it discouraged crossing from one side of the street to the other. The other issue Commission Chair Lee intended to address was parking. He would like to see downtown business areas linked through parking and felt that a more cooperative parking system would be good for businesses.

Joan Bruzzone was present at the meeting and commented that she had been struck by Commission Chair Lee's comments at a previous meeting about special uses in certain areas and allowing for flexibility. Mrs. Bruzzone felt flexibility would be an important element to have in this plan and warned against wording the document so specifically that flexibility would be lost.

Mrs. Bruzzone stated that her biggest point of contention with the process was that the downtown property owners were not given written notice and their input solicited early in the process. She felt it conveyed the message that the public's input was more important to the Committee than the property owners. She felt that input from the downtown property owners and merchants, who have invested time, sweat and money into the downtown, was very important and should be included before the rest of the community became involved.

Mrs. Bruzzone commented that there were many merchants and property owners who were struggling in the current economy and the City has only made it more difficult for them. She cited as an example the Whole Foods store and the current parking requirements, and stated that the time that this store has been vacant hurt not only her as the property owner but the whole town. Mrs. Bruzzone noted that because of the store vacancy her parking lot has become a giant free parking lot for the City.

Commissioner Hertel commented that he supported private property rights and very much admired owner-developers such as Steven Cortese who has done a wonderful job of revitalizing LaFiesta Square and bringing new development to the city. He asked Mrs. Bruzzone about her attitude toward redevelopment. His understanding was that part of the genesis of the downtown plan was the new library project that created new developer interest in the city. Part of that developer's interest included a desire for intensified use, building taller buildings, bringing more retail to the street and redeveloping some of the older private properties.

Mrs. Bruzzone felt it was important that the city progresses. She preferred to maintain her independence, however, commenting that redevelopment comes with having to work with the government. Mrs. Bruzzone stated that she was very much a free-market person. She stated that their downtown property (Plaza Shopping Center) was originally a hillside with 210,000 yds. of dirt that her husband excavated and hauled off himself. Mrs. Bruzzone requested that the City not take that kind of initiative away from the developer and to work with developers in the planning process. She reiterated that the City needed to be more flexible.

Mrs. Bruzzone hoped to see more discussion between the downtown property owners and the City in developing the downtown plan.

Commissioner Marquand asked whether there was a recent development project that Mrs. Bruzzone admired and that adhered to the values she described. Mrs. Bruzzone acknowledged the Cortese developments but suggested the history of the town itself should be considered, acknowledging those who came before Mr. Cortese.

Mrs. Bruzzone referred to the Whole Foods project, and questioned who benefited from the store not opening. She commented that if a property owner wished to make improvements to a property, it would be easier to do with more businesses, particularly if the owner wanted to proceed without government agency money. She questioned whether involving redevelopment money would help get more flexibility in the parking requirements for Whole Foods. Mrs. Bruzzone commented that she recently leased space to the Yogurt Shack and they almost did not open because of parking. She stated that her property has 396 parking spaces, while the parking lot from Diablo Foods to Trader Joes has a total of 244 spaces, and suggested that perhaps the City should review the current parking codes and/or consider variances for parking.

Commission Chair Lee stated the one of the recommendations in the plan was to reduce the parking requirements in the downtown core because it was close enough to public transit to allow for reduced parking counts. However, he was uncertain whether the area discussed included Safeway and Whole Foods. He referred to an idea to create a downtown-employee parking lot on the vacant lot near the westbound freeway off ramp at Deer Hill Road to free up parking spaces for customers.

Commissioner Hertel stated that he was an advocate of under-parking, and believed that the marketplace would indicate whether there was enough parking stalls. He asked whether Mrs. Bruzzone knew if Whole Foods felt the existing parking spaces would be adequate for their store.

Mrs. Bruzzone stated that the lease for that particular building went back to the 1960's, when the parking ratio was 3:1. She pointed out that although the blueprint of the shopping center has not changed since the 1960's in terms of square footage, suddenly the parking available was not enough.

Commissioner Hertel asked whether parking requirements should be related to the property owner's real world needs or to an arbitrary standard set by the City. Mrs. Bruzzone felt the current parking count was adequate.

Commission Chair Lee felt the question was whether Whole Foods felt the existing parking was viable, commenting that it was unlikely that street parking would be unduly impacted by the business if the parking were left as it exists.

Commission Chair Lee commented that a precept to viable downtown shopping atmosphere (which may exclude such specific destinations as Safeway and Whole Foods) it was necessary for people to be able

to park behind one business and to know that they can shop elsewhere down the street. He noted that Steve Cortese bought up multiple properties, consolidated them and created a common parking area, in the same fashion as the Bruzzone shopping center.

Mrs. Bruzzone said that her concern about the specific plan was that it was in bits and pieces and that one section did not carry through to the next. She referred to the extension of Moraga Road up past Safeway and behind McCalous, and the park and trails proposed in various places. She questioned where the 14-ft. trail proposed along First Street would come from. Commission Chair Lee recommended Mrs. Bruzzone attend the next Downtown Strategy Advisory Committee.

Mr. Wolff advised that notice of the plan and meetings has been publicized in the Vistas newsletter more than onece and would likely be published again in the same manner. Planning staff has also worked with the Chamber of Commerce to develop a mailing list of all the downtown property owners and a letter was being sent this week. Mrs. Bruzzone acknowledged receipt of that letter and indicated she has sent out a letter as well. She felt, however, that notice should have been sent to the property owners earlier in the process.

Mrs. Bruzzone felt that public comment should be received after the Design Review Commission offers comments on the plan. She was also disappointed that the prospectus had not been distributed to the property owners earlier.

Bruce Ballentine, Architect, stated that he had not studied the plan in detail and he too was concerned about flexibility and that the overall plan would be too uniform throughout the City to the point of losing the little neighborhood niches that provide so much character. He commented that while the new Cortese building may be appropriate in one area, he would not want to see the same throughout the town or a mile of 3-story buildings along Mt. Diablo Boulevard. He wondered whether the plan was intended an ultimate plan to progress toward or did it create overall limits that cannot be exceeded or was it more loose guidelines.

Commission Chair Lee said that the plan was not intended as a uniform whitewash over the entire City. He said there were seven distinct areas, which were currently less distinct than envisioned in the plan. Commission Chair Lee commented that currently more auto-oriented single businesses were encouraged to be located at the east end of town where transportation was more auto-oriented. Then there was the downtown intended to be pedestrian oriented shopping and dining type businesses. Commission Chair Lee felt more emphasis needed to be placed on pedestrian rather than auto-oriented in this area. Other areas included a downtown civic and cultural area, a gateway district, etc. He stated that it was drafted as a long-range plan that recognizes changes in technology, climate, sustainability, etc. and acknowledges that Lafayette is no longer the small town it was in the 1950's.

Commissioner Hertel felt the plan attempts to allow more flexibility to achieve smart development, creating a partnership between public and private in order to attain a better result.

Mr. Wolff offered a clarification that the public/private partnership of Redevelopment was not a requirement, and was optional to any property owner. He commented that Mr. Cortese came to the City and said he could build a single building with adequate parking on one lot, but was interested in creating a project that the community would benefit from and received public money towards parking and other details. Ultimately, partnering with the City took longer, but the result was far superior for Mr. Cortese and the community. Mr. Wolff stated that redevelopment did offer greater flexibility because it allows the City to contribute funds towards a good project.

Mr. Ballentine said he hoped that philosophy would be plainly a part of this Master Plan. He commented that his experience has been any time anything was put in writing by the government it became the rule and the law to be followed. He would like to see flexibility retained in the formation of this document.

Commission Chair Lee offered as an example regarding flexibility a discussion regarding building heights. The discussion involved setting limits but providing tools for flexibility, such as added height in return for additional setback or some other feature to meet the intent. He expected that revised design guidelines would be a result of the overall plan.

Mr. Wolff clarified that the intent was not to create a Master Plan like a planned community, but a guiding document at the same level as the City's General Plan. The plan would be more of a guiding document than containing rigid zoning regulations.

Mrs. Bruzzone felt the current design review guidelines were very rigid. She would like to see the flexibility allowed in redevelopment projects extended to private development. While new businesses are welcomed in the City, they often meet a wall of frustration in obtaining approvals from the City.

Commission Chair Lee closed the public comment portion of the meeting and requested the Design Review Commission review and provide comment on the following issues:

Green beltway - a controversial issue that cuts through private areas. Commission Chair Lee questioned whether it made sense to run the trail. He referred the Commission to Steve Cortese's letter. Commissioner Hertel noted that he had worked with public documents that did not propose green beltways, but did work them into building masses as alleyways and plazas that needed to be incorporated into the design. He referred to the Bay Meadows specific plan, that each portion was responded to by individual architects. Commission Chair Lee referred to the creek area in San Luis Obispo that was developed in that fashion with each property owner being responsible to create and maintain their portion of the creek in exchange for having two business frontages. It was a project that ultimately 35 years to bring to fruition.

Building heights - and ways to manipulate them.

Modern market planning

Special uses:
Old library site (use as a City Hall, a downtown senior activity center, or sell and scrap)
Park Theater (change to commercial/special use, providing some type of parking, seismic upgrades needed)

Commissioner Cleaver found homogeneity in the graphics and did not reflect the intended sense of flexibility. He perceived the plan as very formulaic. Commissioner Cleaver commented that Lafayette bears little similarity to other cities cited. He commented that the prospectus gave little mention to the new library and wondered why it was denied as an element and not reflected in the design ideas. Commissioner Cleaver commented that for a specific plan, it seemed very non-specific to Lafayette.

Commission Chair Lee noted that everything east of Moraga Road up to Second Street has been identified as the civic and cultural section.

Commissioner Cleaver would like to see the current library as the City offices.

Commissioner Marquand liked the idea of focusing on a more pedestrian-oriented downtown core. He referred to Locust Street in Walnut Creek and suggested that the amount of traffic on that street was comparable to that on Mt. Diablo Blvd. in Lafayette. He recommended that something be done with Golden Gate Way. Commissioner Marquand liked the idea of creating courtyards off the strip because it would break down the scale of space.

Mr. Wolff indicated that the plan would be brought back for further comment at the next meeting.

11. **ADJOURN**: The meeting concluded at 10:05 p.m. The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Design Review Commission is Tuesday, February 24, 2009.

Respectfully submitted,

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Danielle Signorella

EXCERPT

CITY OF LAFAYETTE
DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION
DRAFT Minutes

LAFAYETTE COMMUNITY CENTER
500 St. Mary's Road
Lafayette, CA

March 10, 2009
7:00 p.m.

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by Commission Chair Tom Lee.

2. Commissioners present: Commission Chair Lee, Commissioners Andre Ptaszynski, Bob Cleaver, Ken Hertel and Bill Marquand.

Staff: Greg Wolff, Senior Planner; Glenda Warmoth, Assistant Planner

3. **ADOPTION OF AGENDA:** Mr. Wolff advised interested members of the public that agenda item 6B, RZ01-08, MS501-08 & HDP45-08, originally noticed for public hearing, would be continued without discussion to a future date at the applicant's request. He stated that new public hearing notice would be mailed regarding the continued hearing date. Commissioner Hertel advised that he would be recusing from agenda item 8b, a project within 300 feet of his residence. Commissioner Cleaver moved to approve the agenda as published. Commissioner Marquand seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous consent. (5-0-0)

4. **PUBLIC COMMENT:** None

5. **STUDY SESSIONS:**

A. **SS01-09 SEAN SULLIVAN (APPLICANT), GORDON PLAZA, LLC (OWNER), C-ZONING**: Request for an informational Study Session with the Design Review Commission to discuss plans for a ~75,000 sq.ft. three-story mixed-use development over subterranean parking on a commercial property located at 3672 Mt. Diablo Blvd., APN 241-020-013. **Recommendation**: This is an information only item. No action will be taken by the Commission. **Project Planner**: Greg Wolff

Mr. Wolff referred the Design Review Commission to staff's overview of the project and related applicable rules and regulations.

Phil Banta, of Phillip Banta & Associates Architects, was present at the meeting with applicant Sean Sullivan. He stated that the 1.7-acre subject property was located west of Dolores Drive. The project would be mixed used with commercial space at grade level, condominiums above and town homes behind. The property was zoned as commercial and the applicants have worked to fit the project into the overall massing and density of the area while providing new elements as well.

Mr. Banta described the subject lot as divided by the EBMUD right of way, with the proposed development on the southern portion and with a small section to the north. Adjacent parcels include a small office building to the west, a restaurant to the east, and apartments to the northwest.

Mr. Banta stated that the project has been designed within the envelope of applicable regulations by staying under the 35-foot height limit and staying within the allowable 35 units per acre. He described the project as stepping up the hill with the topography with the condominium apartments located above the storefront commercial spaces. The commercial space would have storefront windows and be divided into two sections (right and left) with a middle pathway up into the center of the project. The two halves of the Mt. Diablo commercial/condo spaces would have a connecting walkway above the gateway into the center courtyard. The plans provided for five storefront entrances along Mt. Diablo Blvd. but Mr. Banta indicated that the number was intended to be flexible depending on the number of tenants. Subterranean parking would be provided for the commercial spaces that would be accessed from the west side of the site via an easement that runs up to the apartment buildings behind the property.

Mr. Banta stated that at the podium (grade) level there would be a total of 92 residential parking spaces, with spaces for each unit and a tandem space behind, as well as 9 guest parking spaces. These parking

they should work with staff for a further continued date. He also cautioned the interested members of the public that no further notice would be provided by the City and they should visit the City's website or contact Planning staff regarding future public hearings or with any questions. Commission Chair Lee appreciated the public participation in the review process and encouraged dialogue between the neighbors and the applicants to try to bring the application to a mutually acceptable conclusion.

Commissioner Cleaver seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous consent. (4-0-0)

9. **OTHER BUSINESS**:

A. **REVIEW OF THE DRAFT DOWNTOWN STRATEGY**

Recommendation: Provide feedback to the Downtown Strategy Advisory Committee Representative Tom Lee. **Project Planner**: Greg Wolff, Senior Planner

Commission Chair Lee requested the Commission's feedback and comments on the draft document. Following the Commission's previous discussion about the plan, Commission Chair Lee forwarded a street section showing one lane in each direction, diagonal parking, bike lanes and broader sidewalks with plantings and opportunities. He also submitted a written statement regarding parking and it needed to be a public commodity in the downtown forum.

Commissioner Cleaver referred to a letter submitted by Planning Commissioner Tom Chastain and his comments recommending the designers for the downtown project look at a creek greenway proposal and making it a priority for the town. He asked whether it was a subject in which the Design Review Commission wished to address. Commission Chair Lee stated that the committee had discussed this idea in its meetings and an issue raised was the difficulties involved because the land in question was private properties. Methodologies of how such projects in other communities have been discussed, including creating a right of way. While Planning Commissioner Chastain's letter regarded the idea as an important idea to be pushed forward, Commission Chair Lee recalled other opinions were less enthusiastic. Commissioner Cleaver said that he leaned toward the latter opinion and did not see the creek as being an amenity to downtown development. Commission Chair Lee felt that having a greenway through the town center that provided a way for people to walk there was necessary and he preferred to see that idea developed rather than turning a drainage ditch into a creek.

Commissioner Ptaszynski commented that the draft report provided no identification of the issues and problems facing Lafayette, nor did it create a hierarchy of those problems to be addressed. Commissioner Ptaszynski stated that one of those problems was that Lafayette was not a pedestrian town and was sliced into sections by unbelievably heavy traffic. He felt that pushing for a more pedestrian town needed to be high priority and he did not see that emphasized in the report. Commission Chair Lee said that was the reason for his recent letter to the committee, and noted that the draft report seemed to be manipulated toward keeping a two-lane road with median. He agreed that a hierarchy of issues was needed, noting that while six issues were listed in the report, it was not a qualitative list.

Commissioner Ptaszynski thought the overall prioritization in the report was unclear, and provided too many attractive suggestions that mask the problems that need prompt attention. He noted that the issue of parking fed right into the issue of pedestrian circulation, and was not addressed by the report. Commissioner Ptaszynski did not see it as a rigorously tightly drawn document that addressed the problems of Lafayette.

Commissioner Cleaver agreed there was a lack of an overriding goal for the report to focus upon. He commented that the report did not focus on a targeted goal or provide any analysis of areas that would provide development opportunity, and as a result, he found it difficult to provide positive comment.

Commissioner Marquand asked whether the committee had an overriding goal. Commission Chair Lee felt that was some lack of understanding the overall picture and there were goals to be created. He thought that the goal was how the picture of the downtown should be painted, and for the downtown core to become pedestrian-oriented. To achieve that goal depended on a whole string of ideas, such as streetscape, medians, crosswalks, street furniture and vendors. He noted it was not the consultant's goal

to create a concrete plan but rather a working armature, from which issues could be extrapolated (i.e., parking, medians, traffic, etc.) Commission Chair Lee commented that within the committee, the focus was different for competing special interest groups, and there has not been communication on the details necessary to achieve the differing ideas. He did not believe there was an understanding within the group that the report was not a plan but a direction that would lead to more concrete plans to achieve the goal. Commissioner Marquand commented that in his discussions about the downtown area, he has not heard any opposition to a more pedestrian downtown. Commission Chair Lee said while there was support for the vignette of strolling downtown Lafayette there was not the same support for the changes necessary to achieve it.

Commission Chair Lee agreed that the report lacked a list of goals, priorities and timelines, as well as a determination of when and who would create the downtown design guidelines.

Mr. Wolff indicated that he would draft a memorandum from the Design Review Commission's discussion to the Downtown Strategic Plan Subcommittee.

10. **COMMISSIONERS' ACTIVITY REPORT**

11. **PLANNING MANAGER'S REPORT**

12. **ADJOURN**: The meeting concluded at 10:45 p.m. The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Design Review Commission is Tuesday, March 24, 2009.

Respectfully submitted,

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Danielle Signorella

SECTION 6.

City of Lafayette Memorandum

To:	City Council Downtown Strategy Committee Planning Commission
From:	Michael Ross, Circulation Commission Chair
CC:	Circulation Commission Leah Greenblat, Transportation Planner
Date:	March 5, 2009
Subject:	Circulation Commission Comments on January 2009 Draft of the Lafayette Downtown Strategy and Specific Plan

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Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the January 2009 Draft of the Lafayette Downtown Strategy and Specific Plan. The Circulation Commission held a joint meeting on February 17, 2009 with the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee to begin its review of the draft document. The Commission held a follow-up meeting on March 2, 2009 to finalize development of its comments on the draft plan. While the attached comments are more specific, the Circulation Commission highlighted its key concerns below in no particular order:

1. *Parking*: This is one of the primary concerns of the residential and business community in Lafayette. The Commission deems the success of the plan contingent on the development of a workable and understandable parking strategy. The January 2009 draft does not contain enough detail and analysis of the potential parking impacts associated with the proposals contained in the draft plan. Key concerns include:

    a. Lack of quantification of the approximate amount and location of where parking is being removed and where it is being proposed. Also identify areas where parking is currently impacted.

    b. Eliminating existing public, particularly long-term, parking (on-street and off-street) via proposed redevelopment projects without sufficient replacement parking in place.

    c. Reducing parking requirements in already under-parked areas of the downtown.

    d. Changing parking requirements such that all visitor parking would be accommodated on-street.

    e. The Commission supports the "park once and walk" concept as an opportunity to lessen the number of trips and vehicle congestion in the Downtown area, but not as a mandate applicable to all parkers. The Commission is concerned about the applicability of the concept due to the significant proportion of disabled, seniors and parents with children within the Lafayette community.

2. *Downtown East of First Street:* Further evaluation is needed relative to the existing street network in light of the proposed increased levels of development and vehicle-oriented development proposed here. The draft plan should include an evaluation on the impact to Brown Avenue as the sole north-south, through-street, and whether any additional north-south connections would be warranted.

3. *Moraga Generated Vehicle Traffic:* The next draft should contain further recognition and incorporation of the traffic impacts associated with the Town of Moraga.

4. *Proposed New Streets and Parking Areas:* The draft plan does not sufficiently describe the purpose or justify the need for the proposed new streets and parking areas. Clarify if the new streets and parking areas would permit through movement when crossing arterials.

5. *Mid-Day Traffic Congestion:* Traffic patterns and signal timing is different during the mid-day period as there is no peak direction. The plan should discuss this and link this to the plan's proposals for addressing congestion during this period.

6. *Pedestrian Safety:* The ability to safely and easily cross streets will be critical to the success of the plan's goal of increasing pedestrian activity in the downtown. Further analysis and options for improving pedestrian safety is needed, particularly at intersections and mid-block due to Lafayette's super-blocks.

7. *Traffic Impacts Due to Medians:* It is unclear whether the draft plan has considered the traffic impacts on vehicle circulation and traffic signal operation associated with the installation of new medians on the east and west ends of downtown when combined with the existing and increased levels of development foreseen.

8. *Maps and Drawings:* Some illustrations perhaps intended to be conceptual in nature, could be misconstrued, while other illustrations are more specific. It is unclear to what extent all of the drawings and maps represent mandates that would have regulatory powers given the Plan's regulatory authority discussed in Chapter 2 and which are conceptual per Chapter 9.

The Circulation Commission appreciates the opportunity to provide feedback on plans for Lafayette's future. Should you have questions regarding our comments, please contact Leah Greenblat, Transportation Planner at 925.299.3229.

Attachments:
Preliminary Circulation Commission Comments on Jan. 2009 Draft Downtown Strategy

Supplemental Circulation Commission Comments on Jan. 2009 Draft Downtown Strategy

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Preliminary Circulation Commission Comments on Lafayette Downtown Strategy and Specific Plan
January 2009 Draft

Item	Page #	Subject	Comment	
1.	Thru-out		This is a high-quality first draft containing many interesting new proposals and analysis. It is rich in content. The plan tries to address historic issues of concern throughout the downtown, but the information provided also raises new issues to consider. The comments below are intended to bring further clarity to the plan and to provide input on portions where the proposed actions may not result in their intended outcome or may be inconsistent with the community's desire.	
2.	Thru-out	Illustrations	Figures, plans, maps, etc. should have ID numbers so they can be easily referenced. The names listed should be more specific. All illustrations need more street names added. Street names should be consistently provided from map to map. Add north arrows, legends, scales. Add a list of all illustrations to the Table of Contents. Note when illustrations are repeated in various chapters, otherwise it is confusing.	
3.	Thru-out	Policy ID Numbers	Policies should a have distinctive numbering convention so a policy in the Land Use chapter isn't mistaken for a policy in the Circulation chapter. (e.g. Policy 1.1 on p. 5-8 and 6-4)	
4.	Thru-out	Background and Support	More background and supporting evidence needs to be included to document and support the need for proposed changes and efficacy of proposed changes.	
5.	Thru-out	Transportation Issues Throughout	While staff appreciates the consultant's efforts to recognize the importance of transportation issues and has incorporated this topic throughout the plan, at times it appears that transportation issues are repeated or inconsistently addressed in the various sections. It would benefit the final document to centralize most of the transportation discussions in one chapter.	
6.	Thru-out	Medians and Pedestrian Crossings	Due to Lafayette's existing "super blocks" medians on Mt. Diablo Blvd. that permit pedestrian crossings only at intersections would likely not facilitate pedestrian activity as the plan intends. Frequent and safe pedestrian crossings need to be incorporated, typically every 250 ft. is the accepted norm for providing good pedestrian circulation.	
7.	Thru-out	Medians and Left Turns	Access ramifications to adjacent properties and traffic signal impacts due to possible restrictions of left-turns out of properties need to be further evaluated prior to implementing medians.	
8.	Thru-out	East of First St., East End and Gateway	Additional attention should be given to the portion of downtown east of First St. Little discussion and few recommendations are included regarding the street network in this area in light of the proposed increased levels of development (and vehicle-oriented development)	

Item	Page #	Subject	Comment	
		District	proposed.	
9.	Thru-out	Redevelopment of Existing Parking	The plan should acknowledge that future parking zones need to mitigate for the loss of existing public parking, particularly long-term parking, throughout the downtown due to the redevelopment of existing parking into new uses (e.g. Gazebo Lot, Oak Hill Rd., Golden Gate Way, Pac Bell Lot, Moraga Rd. etc.) An evaluation of the phasing of redevelopment projects may be needed to minimize potential parking impacts.	
10.	3-6	Concept Sketch: Mt. Diablo Blvd. at Park Plaza	The sketch appears to show the addition of on-street parking approaching First St. Was this intended? What are the traffic impacts of adding on-street parking at this already congested location? How would the additional space for parking be provided? Unless the roadway network is significantly changed and approaches to SR24 reconfigured, the volume of traffic on this block of Mt. Diablo Blvd. is not conducive to on-street parking on the south side.	
11.	3-6	Circulation Framework-Street Network	Why is Happy Valley Road between Mt. Diablo Blvd. and Deer Hill Road shown as a collector and not an arterial?	
12.	3-7	Circulation Framework-Pedestrian Network Plan	It is unclear how this plan relates to other pedestrian network plans and discussions throughout the document. Staff notes that there are locations on the plan that are incorrectly designated as having existing sidewalks. (e.g. page 5-11 at Town Hall Theater) A new "path" is proposed parallel to Moraga Blvd. This is not included in the Master Walkways Plan and is unlikely to be supported by residents on the street at this time.. The pedestrian and bicycle networks show a proposed path crossing Moraga Rd. north of Moraga Blvd. How would this crossing occur and have the impacts to vehicle traffic been evaluated? Clarify if this is the same graphic as shown on page 6-15.	
13.	3-7	Circulation Framework – Bicycle Network Plan	Revise the legend. In Lafayette nomenclature, the term Multi-Purpose Path is used for off-street facilities wide enough to accommodate both pedestrians and bicycles (10ft. min. width) such as the proposed EBMUD Aqueduct Multi-purpose Pathway. A Trail is an off-street facility for pedestrians and typically for recreational purposes. Clarify if the routes following the creeks are intended to be wide enough for both bikes and peds. The cross section on page 7-25 would suggest not.	

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			Sharrows are noted on the legend, but are not shown on the illustration.	
14.	5-3	Existing Destination and Nodes	The area east of Carol Lane on Mt. Diablo Blvd. is an existing, auto-oriented, business node, particularly near Starbucks and 7-11.	
15.	5-3 & 5-4	Priority Areas for Ped. & Transit Enhancements	It is unclear, if the areas noted in yellow already have the most pedestrian activity or if the plan proposes to increase pedestrian and transit activity in these areas. Include an explanation on why the plan appears to build on existing success and not expand success into less active areas.	
16.	5-7	Around the clock activity	It is unclear to staff whether the broader Lafayette community supports developing an "around the clock" activity center in its downtown. Perhaps, it is more appropriate to state that there would be evening and possibly late night activity.	
17.	5-11	City Hall location	The plan states that the Old Library site would make an "excellent location for City Hall." Incorporate details from the traffic analysis that supports locating a new City Hall on Moraga Road.	
18.	5-12	Funky Town District	Show the EBMUD ROW on the enlarged map of this district.	
19.	5-13	East End District	This area's roadway network is characterized by its north-south streets that dead-end, many of which are private streets. With only Mt. Diablo Blvd. and Brown Avenue as through streets, how would the plan avoid strip-style development patterns in this district? The auto-orientation of the development also places a heavier burden on Brown Avenue and Pleasant Hill Road to carry north-south traffic. Are new linkages needed to Deer Hill Road? Are modifications needed to Brown Avenue? Is a pedestrian connection possible to Moraga Blvd. via future re-development to reduce auto-trips?	
20.	5-18	Transit Enhancement Areas	The area around the Park Hotel and Carol Lane should be included as a Transit Enhancement Area. There are several large employers in the area and the hotel attracts a variety of visitors for conferences and events. Improving the transit access in this area could help to reduce the use of single-occupancy vehicles (SOV). New bus service will soon be serving this area with increased frequencies. Consider running the proposed shuttle to the Lafayette Park Hotel and the Veterans Building.	
21.	5-19	Transit Shuttle	Add an explanation of how the proposed shuttle would help improve access for existing	

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			residents and employees. What triggers need to occur prior to establishing shuttle service and how could service be paid for?	
22.	5-19	Fueling Station Locations	The plan proposes to encourage fueling stations predominately on the eastern end of downtown. If no fueling stations exist west of Moraga Rd., drivers from the west, south and north would have to drive through downtown to get to a station or alternatively travel to Orinda to purchase. This potentially either adds traffic to the already congested Y (described on page 6-2) or discourages purchase in Lafayette. While the current form of gas stations is land intensive, the future may change this. Charging stations or mixed-use development with gas stations may result in dramatic changes to the "look" of this land use in the future. Evaluate the traffic and sales tax impact of locating fueling stations all in the east end. Consider modifying this proposal to accommodate and support fueling stations west of Moraga Rd.	
23.	6-3	Street Network Plan	Clarify if the new local streets are intended to be public or private passways. Revise the name of the illustration to read "Vehicle" Street Network.	
24.	6-3	Streetscape Character	In addition to adding a legend, the accompanying text needs further explanation. Clarify why some streets are identified as "Connector" and others "Streetscape." Why is Moraga Road a "Gateway" but not the east and west end of Mt. Diablo Blvd. Why are the streets shown on the Street Network Plan not all shown on the Streetscape Character Plan?	
25.	6-4 & throughout	"Eliminating, Relieving or Reducing" Congestion	All local traffic models predict increased vehicle miles travel and congestion in the Bay Area. It provides a false expectation to the reader to suggest that traffic congestion may be reduced. It is more likely that the City may be able to minimize the impacts from congestion or minimize its rate of growth. Delete the phrase "and potentially reverse that trend" in the first paragraph and review the entire document for similar statements. Revise Policy 1.4 on p. 6-5.	
26.	6-4	Policy 1.1 Proximity and Vehicle Trip Reduction	The discussion associated with this policy should also mention that appropriate pedestrian facilities should also be provided in order for proximity to promote pedestrian activity.	
27.	6-4 and 6-5	Policy 1.2: Higher density and roadway network	It is unclear where in the East End and Gateway Districts higher density development is proposed. The discussion states that the higher density can be achieved by "allowing vehicle trips to enter and leave the downtown area via multiple routes." Few new roadways are proposed on the east end; is this based on an analysis of the higher density development	

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			impacts?	
28.	6-4	Policy 1.3	It is less likely the plan will generate significant new pedestrian trips without new protected and enhanced north-south crossings on Mt. Diablo Blvd. "Improving *safety and* mobility" are needed.	
29.	6-5	Vehicle travel lane narrowing	It is unclear how narrowing vehicle travel lanes will "calm traffic." Other than the west and east ends of Mt. Diablo Blvd., the travel speeds are typically obeyed. A more appropriate justification for narrowing the lanes is to accommodate more uses within the ROW.	
30.	6-5	Action 1.3.1: New Circulation Connections	Provide background as to why the proposed new circulation connections are appropriate and needed. Clarify if these new connections are public streets or private development.	
31.	6-5	Action 1.3.3 and 1.3.4: New Traffic Signals	While the new signals may facilitate vehicle movement, pedestrian circulation will require more frequent crossing opportunities on Mt. Diablo Blvd.; approximately every 250 ft. is commonly cited for pedestrian-friendly streets.	
32.	6-5	Actions 1.3.5 and 1.3.6: Multipurpose Paths on Oak Hill and First St.	Include an explanation of how these new facilities would fit into the proposed non-motorized network. How are safety issues, associated with transitioning at the end of the paths, addressed?	
33.	6-5 & 6-6	School Bus	According to Juliet Hansen, Lamorinda School Bus Program Manager, past experience has indicated there is limited parent interest in school bus service to Lafayette Elementary School. Prior service was discontinued due to a lack of participation. As a whole, Lafayette's schools could receive additional bus service by off-setting bell times. Currently, a lower percentage of school trips are provided by the school bus program in Lafayette than in Orinda or Moraga due to the bell time schedule. But even with off-set bell times, there is insufficient funding to expand school bus service at Stanley. Upcoming budget constraints will likely result in less service to Stanley because several routes have low ridership. In 2009, CCTA's Measure J funding for the program will be reduced from $1.3 million to $876,000 necessitating cutting two buses.	
34.	6-6	Actions 1.4.1 and 1.4.2 Traffic Issues	Past experience has shown limited success working with schools possibly due to transportation issues being considered not one of their primary priorities. As a result, in insufficient appropriate resources are dedicated to addressing transportation issues. Consider	

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		Near Schools	a new action to apply pressure to the districts and school administrators to dedicate resources (time and staff) to participate in at least already existing programs geared towards reducing transportation impacts generated by schools.	
35.	6-6	Action 1.5.1 Frequency of Traffic Counts	Bi-annual counts (i.e. every 6 months) are too frequent given the relatively slow rate of change in Lafayette. Every other year or longer would be more appropriate.	
36.		Mid-Day Traffic Patterns	During the AM and PM peak periods, the traffic signals are timed to best service the peak traffic flow. During the mid-day, the traffic flows are more evenly balanced and the existing signal timing reflects this change in patterns. This is why even though the traffic volumes may be lower at this time of day than in the peak periods, many drivers still note their frustration traveling at this time of day due to the congestion levels. The plan should discuss this subject and identify strategies for addressing it. For example, the proposed shuttle service is one method of addressing the subject.	
37.	6-7	Policy 1.7 Development Constrained by Traffic Conditions	Additional information needs to be provided as to how this policy would be implemented. How would the City know when development could be constrained? Could it ever be prohibited? What are the thresholds? How would fluctuations in traffic volumes impact this policy? How would the City make sure that the policy wasn't applied arbitrarily?	
38.	6-8	Parking Supply	List and map which "parking lots and adjacent on-street parking areas are parked at capacity with some regularity." It is difficult for Staff to evaluate the proposed actions' potential effectiveness without understanding where the existing parking problems are occurring. Based on our understanding of the parking issues, it appears that some proposed strategies throughout the plan could worsen parking conditions in already impacted areas, unless planned and phased-in appropriately.	
39.	6-8	Policy 2.1	In order to encourage the desired parking behavior, would it be appropriate for the City to implement parking rate policies to encourage off-street parking similar to Redwood City?	
40.	6-8	Action 2.1.1 Monitoring Parking	Would periodic monitoring apply to both public and private parking? Revise action to evaluate increasing parking rates if "on-street parking, *parking structures or lots are* regularly over 85 percent occupied."	
41.	6-8	Action 2.1.2 Shared Parking	Provide more information on how shared parking could be implemented. What obstacles need to be addressed? What supporting City actions need to occur?	
42.	6-8	Action 2.1.5	Clarify to whom, "the public parking would be made available at market prices."	

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		Market Prices for Parking		
43.	6-9	Policy 2.2 and Action 2.2.1 Reduced Parking Requirements near BART	The employers and employees in existing commercial and office development near BART frequently complain that the area is under parked. How would lowering the parking provisions for future development help to relieve the existing situation? Explain how the proposed new parking requirements are appropriate for Lafayette and provide a comparison to the existing parking requirements. What qualitative differences will occur under the proposed changes?	
44.	6-9	Parking Strategy Map	Provide information on what is meant by an "Aggregated Parking Zone." This term is not discussed in the text. The map may be intended to be a conceptual depiction of possible future parking areas, but it appears too specific and may imply greater detail than what is intended.	
45.	6-11	Mt. Diablo Blvd. (Mtn. View – 2nd St.)	The existing cross-section should show the on-street parking dimension as 7 ft. not 8 ft.	
46.	6-11	Moraga Rd. (Moraga Blvd. to Mt. Diablo Blvd.)	The existing cross-section indicates a 12 ft. parking area. This should show a 7-8 ft. parking area with a shoulder or a wide outside travel lane.	
47.	6-14	Policy 4.1 Sidewalk Widths	Policy 4.1 states that an 8 ft. sidewalk is preferred within the Downtown Retail, Civic and Cultural, and Residential District. On page 6-11, two cross sections within these areas show different dimensions. Mt. Diablo Blvd. is shown with an 11 ft. sidewalk and Moraga Rd. is shown with a 6ft. sidewalk. Additionally p. 7-13 shows 11ft. sidewalks on Mt. Diablo Blvd. and p. 7-16 shows 6 ft. sidewalk on Moraga Rd. If these primary downtown streets are not to be handled in the same way as other streets within the District, the policy and actions should reflect this situation.	
48.	6-14	Policy 4.1	An action should be included to plan for and provide transit and shuttle stops with sufficient sidewalk width to accommodate passenger loading and unloading.	
49.	6-14	Action 4.2	This action is confusing and the desired action unclear.	
50.	6-15	Pedestrian Network Plan	Clarify if this is the same graphic as shown on page 3-7. On the east end, to facilitate neighborhood access from the south, identify possible future	

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			pedestrian connections between Carol Lane and 3rd St. to Moraga Blvd. and the Lafayette-Moraga Trail. Show an existing planned path from the southern end of Mt. Diablo Ct. to Pleasant Hill Rd.	
51.	6-14 & 6-16	Policy 4.3 Off-Street Path System	Whether or not the EBMUD Aqueduct Multipurpose Path is within or outside the confines of the study area, it is depicted on numerous maps and shown on the Bicycle and Pedestrian Network Plans. This proposed pathway should be included under Policy 4.3 and relevant actions proposed.	
52.	6-16	Action 4.4.2 Pedestrian Access at BART	To serve BART patrons in the west end, include or add a separate action to provide a crosswalk and crossing enhancements across Happy Valley Road at the south BART parking lot. This project may include curb bulbs, in-pavement flashing lights, striping, handicap ramps and overhead lighting. Jaywalkers are frequently observed at this location and the Circulation Commission previously recommended these improvements.	
53.	6-16	Action 4.5.2 Crosswalk Enhancements	Lafayette's wide and multi-lane streets can be intimidating for pedestrians to cross. Providing a mid-point refuge shortens the distance a pedestrian must cross at one time. Add pedestrian refuge islands as an enhancement.	
54.	6-16	Action 4.5.3 Green Right Turn Arrows	The use of a right-turn green arrow alone is not in and of itself a pedestrian safety issue. The green arrow at Mt. Diablo Blvd. and Moraga Rd. is the result of prior policies adopted under the Lamorinda Traffic Study. The City used Measure C funds partially predicated on implementing the right-turn green arrow. Removing it may impact our commitments to using those funds. Consider modifying the action to augment the pedestrian walking phase and corner waiting areas to improve safety include state of the art improvements for the sight impaired.	
55.	6-17	Sidewalk and Intersection Improvement Plan	Clarify how this plan is different than the Pedestrian Network Plans discussed above. Pedestrian crossings are not limited to street intersections. With Lafayette's super blocks, it is important to provide safe, periodic crossing opportunities in order to facilitate pedestrian activity. Denote potential future EBMUD Aqueduct Pathway (pending feasibility study) crossing locations at Mountain View Dr., Happy Valley Road, Oak Hill Rd. and First St.	

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			Add a crossing enhancement on Mt. Diablo Blvd. at the Veterans Building easternmost driveway. Add a crossing enhancement at the intersections of Mt. Diablo Blvd. and Happy Valley Road, Mt. Diablo Court and Pleasant Hill Road. Add a crossing enhancement at Brown Ave. near Hall Lane Add a crossing enhancement on Happy Valley Road at the south BART driveway. Consider a mid-block crossing enhancement on Mt. Diablo Blvd. between Lafayette Circle East and West. (Pedestrians are frequently observed crossing through the landscaped median at this location.)	
56.	6-18	County Connection	County Connection is in the process of significantly overhauling its route system. Service in Lafayette will be changing effective March 2009.	
57.	6-18	Bus/shuttle Stop Locations	The plan should include policies and actions supporting the incorporation of appropriately designed bus and shuttle stops in new development and redeveloped streetscapes. Provide pedestrian waiting areas, stops that can accommodate wheel chair lifts and suitable locations for vehicles to load and unload passengers.	
58.	6-18	Action 5.1.1	It is unclear how the use of smaller buses could increase transit service. According to County Connection staff the primary expense is the cost of the driver.	
59.	6-18	Policy 5.2 Lafayette Spirit Van	Future cost effectiveness of the Lafayette Spirit Van program should be monitored.	
60.	6-18	Policy 5.3 Downtown Shuttle	Clearly state the purposes for introducing shuttle service so that future schedule and routing can be planned appropriately. Staff views the shuttle's primary purposes to: provide a link between BART and businesses for commuting employees and customers; reduce lunch time single-occupant vehicle trips; facilitate access to businesses for residents living downtown; and provide a transportation option to support the park-once philosophy. Consider extending the downtown shuttle service to the Park Hotel and the Veterans Building to provide access to the City's large employment centers.	

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61.	6-20	TDM's Purpose	Add a discussion that Transportation Demand Management also provides incentives to encourage the use of alternative modes of transportation. Due to Lafayette's BART Station, TDM measures need to focus on the continued use of transit. Transit Flex Programs such as Wage Works and Commuter Checks provide an on-going financial incentive to use transit on a regular basis. Saving employees and employers money for using transit rather than driving is likely one of the most successful incentives for promoting the use of desired commuting modes.	
62.	6-22	TDM Actions	Add actions to require all (new) businesses of a certain size to offer transit flex programs; implement a business registry program so it is possible for the City to provide TDM information to employers and employees; periodically survey employers and employees to better understand commute patterns and tailor programs appropriately to encourage non-SOV travel.	
63.		Emerging Transportation Issues	As this is a strategy that covers the next 20 years, it should have an eye on the future and include a discussion of future transportation trends likely to occur over the plan's time span. For example: Will organizations like Flexcar likely expand to Lafayette? Are downtown-wide bike sharing programs feasible? What new methods for efficiently parking vehicles are on the horizon? Does the City need to consider the appropriate use of Segways? Is there new traffic signal technology that should be incorporated? Will infrastructure need to be installed at transit stops to support real-time bus information?	
64.	7-2	Parks and Creeks Plan	Label the EBMUD Aqueduct Trail that's depicted. Show all of the creeks' routes in blue.	
65.	7-3	Public Realm	Add "trails" and "sidewalks" to the list of facilities in the public ROW.	
66.	7-4	Public Open Space	What is the difference between this map and the map on p. 7-2? Show the EBRPD Trail that is west of Brown Ave. and near the proposed senior housing project. Explain why the "Greenway Connections" were selected. Why does the 1st Street greenway connection stop north of Mt. Diablo Blvd. and leave a gap to the "Potential Park"? Consider designating School Street as a Greenway Connection since it intersects 1st St., the Lafayette-Moraga Trail and creeks shown on the map.	

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			There is a planned potential park on the southwest corner of Mt. Diablo Blvd. and Mt. Diablo Ct. Consider showing the Lafayette Cemetery as Existing Public Open Space.	
67.	7-8	Gazebo Park Plan	The proposed Gazebo Park is located on an existing public parking lot which the City leases to nearby businesses to provide long-term parking for employees. The lot has 30 spaces and rarely has any vacancies. This is a location where the nearby Golden Gate Way business community has indicated that they need additional parking. As the area is redeveloped, the employee parking needs should be fulfilled within the new development or in an alternative location, but in order not to exacerbate the current parking conditions further, the timing of this park's development should not occur until these alternatives are in place. The planted median on Mt. Diablo Blvd. blocks access to Golden Gate Way. Pedestrian crossing improvements are needed across Mt. Diablo Blvd. to access the park. Show on the plan map: the creek, existing bridge and trail and nearby Creekside Park. If possible show the Lafayette-Moraga Trail to provide context. The trail link via the existing bridge needs to be widened to accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists.	
68.	7-10	Streetscape Design Guidelines	It is unclear to staff why this section isn't located within the Circulation Chapter. As is, it creates a disjointed, repetitive and confusing section. Is there a link between the bulleted list of streets and the "Streetscape Framework" on p. 7-11?	
69.	7-10	Community Character Goal 2	This goal seems redundant with the Circulation Goals and combines many of the Circulation Goals into one goal.	
70.	7-10	Policy 2.1	How does Policy 2.1 in Chapter 7 fit with Policy 4.1 in Chapter 6 (p. 6-14). They seem related and should be addressed in closer proximity to one another.	
71.	7-11	Policy 2.3 On-	This policy and Action 2.3.1 should be relocated and included in the Circulation Chapter with	

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		Street Parking	the earlier discussion on on-street parking.	
72.	7-11	Streetscape Framework	Show and label additional streets on map in order to orient the reader. Without a legend, the intent of this map is unclear. What is meant by the term "Connector"? Why is Moraga Road a "Gateway" but not the east and west ends of Mt. Diablo Blvd.? Generally, approximately north of Bickerstaff Ave., the streets shown in yellow as Neighborhood Streetscape should be re-defined. Approximately north of Bickerstaff, few of the land uses on these streets are primarily residential.	
73.	7-12	Mt. Diablo Blvd.	On the west and east end, medians and landscaped setbacks are proposed as a means of making "the approach to the downtown core take on the character of a greenway." Given that the downtown core already has medians, it is unclear how the proposed streetscape would be different than the downtown core. What are the impacts of restricting left turns? The traffic impacts and property access ramifications from the new medians needs to be evaluated. For example, if no left-turns are permitted due to medians, then more vehicles would be making u-turns at the intersections (Dolores Dr. and Risa Road/Village Center). If gaps (and acceleration lanes) in the medians are provided to permit left-turns, how will the frequency and spacing of driveways impact the median concept? Text states 5 ft. bike lanes are proposed, but most cross sections show 6 ft. bike lanes. The text also states that several changes are proposed to "help calm traffic" in the core area. Historically, speeding has not been an issue in the core area. The proposed changes can be justified by better utilizing the existing ROW to provide facilities for all modes.	
74.	7-12	West Mt. Diablo Cross Section	The prevailing existing cross-section is different than what is depicted in the cross-section.	
75.	7-13	Downtown Mt. Diablo Cross Section	The existing parking area is 7 ft. wide. Because the proposed travel lanes are 10 ft. wide, staff prefers that the bike lanes be 6 ft. wide instead of 5 ft. and the parking remain at 7 ft. wide.	

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76.	7-14	Happy Valley Rd.	The proposed 5 ft. bike lanes are not consistent with the Bicycle Network Plan shown on p. 6-12. The existing cross-section does not appear to be correct. There is existing on-street parking along the majority of both sides of the street. Portions of the existing west side ROW is undeveloped. On the east side, the existing sidewalk is either within or behind the ROW line.	
77.	7-15	Oak Hill Rd.	The existing cross section is incorrect. The outside "Travel Lane"s should be relabeled "Turn Lane/Prkg." with dimensions listed as 8' to 11.5 ft. Will future travel demand necessitate 6 travel lanes as shown in the proposed cross section for Oak Hill Rd.? Alternatively, should the "travel lane/parking" be re-labeled as a "turn lane/parking"? The existing on-street parking provides long-term parking (36 spaces) primarily for BART parkers but also for Lafayette employees. By proposing a "swing lane" during peak periods and changing the time limits of this parking to off-peak hours, it potentially eliminates this location for many long-term parkers. From the freeway to the north, this is one of the few centrally located, long-term parking areas and it is consistently fully parked. Prior to implementing this roadway modification, alternative long-term parking should be considered. When calculating the needed size of nearby future parking facilities, these existing parking spaces should be accounted for.	
78.	7-15	First St.	The proposed cross section adds off-peak parking on the west side of 1st St. where none exists today. It is unclear if new on-street parking is proposed south of SR24 on the east side of the street. Unless the roadway network is significantly modified and off-ramp traffic is diverted, the traffic volumes on First St. are not conducive to on-street parking on the west side. Similarly on the east side of the street, due to the heavy volumes of traffic using 1st St. to access SR24 on-ramps, on-street parking south of the on-ramp is not recommended without a significant change to the road network. The existing on-street parking (11 spaces) on the east side is north of the SR24 on-ramp accommodates long-term parking for BART patrons and downtown employees. These parking spaces are less frequently occupied. If the proposed on-street parking remains only	

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			north of SR-24, it may be possible to maintain these parking spaces. The 1st St. cross section extends to Mt. Diablo Blvd., but the text describes the "the First Street path has the added advantage of being able to connect into the First Street multipurpose path to the south as it extends south from Golden Gate Way." This implies that the new path crosses Mt. Diablo Blvd. and extends to Golden Gate Way. Is that the intent? Would the same pathway cross-section apply between Mt. Diablo Blvd. & Golden Gate Wy?	
79.	7-16	Moraga Rd.	The existing cross section is incorrect. On-street parking is 7 ft. wide and the remaining space is a shoulder area. The existing shoulder area on the east side is likely less than 6 ft. at its widest point. In the proposed cross section, staff prefers a 6 ft. bike lane adjacent to a 10 ft. travel lane and maintaining the 7 ft. parking. The right of way is not uniform and it would be difficult to implement the proposed cross section throughout the length of the street. The proposed cross section appears to be only applicable from Brook St. to approximately Plaza Way due to the northbound, left-turn lane. The proposed 6 ft. sidewalk is not consistent with Policy 4.1 on p. 6-14 which calls for an 8 ft. preferred sidewalk width. Revise the first sentence of the text to read, *Given its high vehicle volumes,* the Moraga Road right of way is very narrow…" Clarify in the text that generally the on-street parking is kept to the west side of the street except by Squirrel Coffee Shop. Prior public comment frequently mentioned the parking in front of Squirrel Coffee Shop as a concern, but the matter is not directly discussed in the plan. On-street parking is proposed for removal south of Brook St. When calculating the needed size of nearby future parking facilities, these existing parking spaces should be accounted for.	
80.	7-18	Neighborhood	Provide an example list of applicable streets for each type.	

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		Street Types		
81.	7-24 & 7-25	Golden Gate Way	Provide further explanation of what is meant by reconfiguring and modifying the width and alignment of Golden Gate Way. Would the changes occur along the entire length of the street?	
82.	7-25	Lafayette Creek Greenway	The reconfiguration of Golden Gate Way would result in the loss of some on-street parking when parking is reconfigured from angled to parallel. When calculating the needed size of nearby future parking facilities, these existing parking spaces should be accounted for.	
83.	7-26	Community Character Goal 5	Modify goal to read "…Lafayette trails identified on the Master Trails Plan *and the Bikeways Master Plan.*"	
84.	9-2	Implementation	Add a table that briefly summarizes the main components of the projects listed in the Capital Improvements list. This will provide a central reference for projects proposed throughout the entire document.	
85.	9-17	Peak Period Impacted Parking	List the specific locations that experience impacted parking during peak periods. Include this information in the Circulation Chapter, Parking section.	

Supplemental Circulation Commission Comments on Lafayette Downtown Strategy and Specific Plan, January 2009 Draft

Item	Page #	Subject	Comment
1.		Bike Plan	Likes that Lafayette's Bikeways Master Plan has been incorporated throughout the document.
2.	6-3	Moraga Rd. Extension	It is unclear how the proposed northern extension of Moraga Rd. and the proposed east-west street north of Mt. Diablo Blvd., would address the City's long-range needs.
3.	6-8 thru 6-10	Parking	The entire parking section is confusing.
4.	Thru-out	Chapter 6	Additional discussion should be incorporated about the traffic impacts in Downtown Lafayette generated from trips originating in Moraga.
5.	7-10	Policy 2.1	Careful attention needs to occur when street furniture is incorporated within the public right-of-way in order not to impede the ability of the visually impaired to navigate walkways.
6.	Thru-out	Parking	The draft plan potentially removes vehicle parking via lower parking requirements near BART, shifting visitor parking requirements to occur on-street, re-development of existing off-street lots (Pac Bell and Gazebo) and re-development of City ROW (Oak Hill Rd., Golden Gate Way) while there is still concern among residents and businesses of insufficient availability of parking. The plan needs to incorporate further discussion regarding why the proposed changes will not worsen the perception that there is a parking shortage and drive shoppers to nearby towns.
7.	6.6	Relieving School Congestion	Investigate whether the City should promote a taxi-van service (e.g. Kids Kab, Kids Taxi Service) which picks up and drops off students in order to reduce traffic congestion at downtown schools. Could this supplement school bus service where ridership is insufficient to warrant a bus?
8.	6-10 & 9-6	Visitor Parking	The elimination of off-street visitor parking is potentially problematic when combined with a reduction in parking requirements. If a new development is required to provide only one parking space per dwelling unit, residents tend to park their extra second vehicles on-street thus utilizing all potential visitor parking.
9.	6-2 & 6-6	Traffic Count Periods	If traffic from the various factors contributing to congestion occur in the morning, noon hour, mid-afternoon and evening commute, then why are on-going traffic counts only recommended for the AM and PM?

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10.	6-4	Policy 1.1	Provide additional information about walkable sub-districts. What is the intent of a sub-district and what types of activities would occur in one? Where would the parking be?
11.	6-5	Action 1.3.1	Additional detail is needed regarding new circulation connections. Provide examples of what these connections might look like.
12.	6-8	Parking Capacity	Incorporate more detail on parking demand levels and reference consultant's earlier evaluation.
13.	6-9	Target Zone for City Parking Facility	The proposed City Parking Facility centered on the Campana site could be problematic given its proximity to Moraga Rd. and Mt. Diablo Blvd.
14.	6-10 & 9-10	Parking and Opportunity Sites	Explain the relationship between the Parking Requirement Plan Map and the Opportunity Site Map.
15.	6-12	Bike Network Plan	Further explanation is needed on the Bicycle Network Plan. Provide additional detail (information) on the map.
16.	6-8 & 6-21	Parking Meter Usage	Consider establishing a sub-committee to evaluate usage and impacts of meters in addition to changes in fees.
17.	6-22	Policy 6.4	Provide examples of how TDM services and incentives would work.
18.	Thru-out	Street Network Plan	The maps imply that the locations of the new streets are set in terms of location. Future development appears likely to be inhibited.
19.	6-9 & 1-8	Parking Strategy Map	Shopping Center north of Mt. Diablo Blvd. at Moraga Rd. should be referred to as a study area for possible future parking. The map implies greater detail than what should be shown. The dashed line outlining the location looks too specific. Future development appears likely to be inhibited.
20.	6-11	Median Widths	Why have a 12 ft. median when adjacent travel lanes are 10 ft. wide? Why not reduce to 10 ft. wide and use the extra 2 ft. to make the travel lanes wider by 6 inches each?
21.	6-3	Street Network and	Consider identifying Happy Valley Rd. between Deer Hill Rd. and Mt. Diablo Blvd. as an arterial and re-naming this section Deer Hill Road as it functions as a continuation of Deer Hill Road.

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		Character	
22.	6-11	Sidewalk Width & Street Trees	Six foot sidewalks are suggested with street trees; however at the trees' maturity, the effective width of the sidewalk will be reduced considerably. If the desire is to have 6 ft. of usable sidewalk, make the sidewalk wider. Alternatively, select street trees with narrow trunks at maturity.
23.	5-7	24- Hour Activity & BART's Hours of Operation	Since BART does not operation 24-hours per day, then why have around the clock transit-oriented development in the downtown?
24.	6-19	Transit Network Plan	Update transit routes. Identify and designate routes that operate to provide school service only.
25.	6-10	Policy 2.3	Clarify what is meant by "end-users."
26.	4-5		Include an acknowledgement that Lafayette's carbon footprint is impacted by traffic generated by the Town of Moraga and is outside of the control of the City of Lafayette.
27.	5-5	Clustered Restaurants	Why won't grouping restaurants (likely with similar peak demand times) into one area impede shared use of parking?
28.	5-8	Parking in Downtown Residential District	The neighborhoods west and northwest of Lafayette School currently experience overflow parking from Downtown employees and BART parkers; while the existing, older development is under-parked. New housing and commercial development in this area should provide adequate parking instead of permitting reduce parking requirements.
29.	5-18	Parking Impacts	A reduction in parking availability downtown could result in a loss of sales tax revenue, additional congestion on roadways, and increase carbon footprint as residents drive to other jurisdictions to shop.
30.	6-3	Street Network Plan	The proposed new extension of Happy Valley Road south to Bickerstaff could potentially encourage cut through traffic on neighborhood streets and diversion from Mt. Diablo Blvd. for drivers destined for downtown schools. Consider developing this connection for pedestrians and bicyclists only.
31.	6-9	Policy 2.2	The BART station is located in Lafayette's prime retail core which is already short of parking. If parking requirements were reduced for developments closer to the BART station, what impact would this have on on-street parking on nearby streets?

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32.	6-9	Parking Strategy Map	Don't locate a parking facility on Moraga Rd. as it is prime retail land, unless the parking facility incorporates retail use along the frontage.
33.	6-10	Parking Requirements Plan	The parking space requirements are set too low given Lafayette's history of being under-parked.
34.	6-18	Shuttle & Transit Service	Support the proposed new downtown shuttle loop. Given County Connection's near-term service level reductions, is it realistic to suggest improved transit connections between Downtown, outlying neighborhoods and neighboring jurisdictions?
35.	6-21	Parking Rates & Policy 2.1.1	Free parking and easy circulation in neighboring cities may encourage shoppers to go elsewhere; thereby reducing sales tax revenue and downtown business viability. Remaining shoppers likely to be new downtown residents only and not shoppers using alternatives to driving.
36.	7-30	Character of Downtown Retail, paragraph 2	Change "occasional" to "frequent" so that views to surrounding hills occur frequently. Retain some 1 storey buildings.
37.	7-30	West End Parking	Requiring infill development to provide rear or side surface parking will drive out Diamond K Supply. This is a successful local retailer whose presence reduces driving trips by providing these supplies in Lafayette.
38.	7-32	Housing & Retail Numbers	Provide a comparison between the retail and housing numbers contained in the Lafayette General Plan 2002 and the proposed Draft Downtown Specific Plan.
39.	8-1	Impacts on Infrastructure	Implications of development on infrastructure are not discussed in this chapter.
40.	9-2	Cost Estimates	Clarify if land acquisition costs are included in the cost estimates? Increase the size of the footnote text.
41.	9-5	Missing Table	Paragraph 1 refers to a table that is not included in the document.
42.	9-16	Reduced	Reduced parking requirements would not be desirable if it means under-parked employees, BART

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		Parking Requirements	patrons, multi-family residences and commercial development will park on neighborhood side streets.
43.	9-17	Parking Requirements	Reference applicable studies supporting reduced parking requirements in new downtown development.
44.	9-17	Land Assembly	Is Eminent Domain foreseen as a means of assembling land?
45.	6-3	New Local St. link to Bickerstaff	The proposed new local street between Mt. Diablo Blvd. and Bickerstaff would potentially draw traffic to lower volume streets which have been identified in the Bikeways Master Plan as a Bike Boulevard and are intended to be used by less experienced bicyclists.
46.	6-11	Bike Lanes on Mt. Diablo	Supports reconfiguration of Mt. Diablo Blvd. cross section (reducing median widths) to incorporate bike lanes.
47.	6-12	Bike Blvd.	Clarify that a roadway treatment for a Bike Boulevard is different than that for a Bike Route.
48.	6-14	Pedestrian Circulation	Add an action to provide benches for seniors and other pedestrians to offer sanctioned space for people to be downtown and a part of the community scene.
49.	5-22 & 7-22	Gazebo Park	Gazebo Park is an isolated location that does not attract park users. Further expansion and development of the park should not occur unless tied to the creek greenway development on Golden Gate Way.
50.	9-11	Ground Floor Plans of Shopping Mall Area	There are two very detailed ground floor plans neither of which conforms to any of the street, parking, bicycle and pedestrian plans on pages 1-7, 1-8, 3-6, 3-9, 6-9, 6-12 and 6-15. Too much detail is shown to a level that could be construed to dictate rather than suggest a future layout despite the statements made in the text on page 9-10. If this plan is to become a future legal planning document it would seem wise to correct these conflicts.